

MY NAME IS COLONEL JOHN WHITE AND I RETIRED LAST MONTH AFTER SERVING 26 YEARS AS AN ARMY AVIATOR. LET ME BEGIN BY THANKING THE MEMBERS OF THE PANEL FOR THEIR SERVICE DURING THEIR MILITARY CAREERS AND BY AGAIN SERVING BY BECOMING MEMBERS OF THIS PANEL. THE RECOMMENDATIONS THIS PANEL WILL GIVE TO THE LEADERS OF OUR GOVERNMENT AND MILITARY WILL HELP SHAPE THE ARMY WE NEED FOR THE FUTURE. LTG TAYLOR AND MG COX ASKED ME TO SPEAK TO YOU TODAY AND PRESENT MY VIEWS ON THE APACHE ISSUE...THAT IS THE PART OF THE ARMY'S AVIATION RESTRUCTURING INITIATIVE THAT CONSOLIDATES THE APACHES IN THE ACTIVE COMPONENT.

I'VE BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH THE APACHE FOR THE LAST 26 YEARS. I BEGAN MY AVIATION CAREER AS AN AEROSCOUT / OH-58 PILOT IN AN APACHE BATTALION AND DEPLOYED TO DESERT SHIELD/STORM IN THE 82ND AIRBORNE DIVISION WHERE WE FOCUSED ON CLOSE SUPPORT TO THE INFANTRY BRIGADES AND THE DEEP ATTACK MISSION. I COMMANDED AN APACHE COMPANY IN KOREA AND A HEADQUARTERS COMPANY AT FT BRAGG; THESE BATTALIONS FOCUSED ON THE DEEP ATTACK MISSION WHICH WAS THE DOCTRINE IN THE 90'S. AS A MAJOR I SERVED AS THE S3 OF AN ATTACK BATTALION AT FT CAMPBELL, DEPLOYED TO OEF 1 AS THE S3 OF TF TALON WHERE I PLANNED AND EXECUTED THE AIR ASSAULT FOR OPERATION ANACONDA AND I CONTINUED THAT DEPLOYMENT AS THE S3 OF AN ATTACK BATTALION WHEN IT DEPLOYED TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL APACHE ASSETS. I DEPLOYED WITH THAT SAME BATTALION AS THE S3 TO OIF 1 AND ENDED THAT DEPLOYMENT AS THE BRIGADE XO OF THE 101ST AVIATION BRIGADE WHICH AT THAT TIME HAD 3 APACHE BATTALIONS. I COMMANDED AN APACHE BATTALION AT FT CAMPBELL AND COMMANDED A MULTI-FUNCTIONAL AVIATION TASK FORCE IN AFGHANISTAN THAT INCLUDED APACHES, BLACKHAWKS, KIOWA WARRIORS AND MY MEDEVAC AND CHINOOK UNITS WERE FROM THE NATIONAL GUARD. I SERVED AS THE LAST COMMANDER OF

THE 21ST CAVALRY BRIGADE WHOSE MISSION WAS TO TRAIN AND CERTIFY APACHE BATTALIONS INCLUDING ALL NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVE BATTALIONS THAT DEPLOYED. ADDITIONALLY, WE TRAINED THE FIRST 5 GRAY EAGLE COMPANIES FIELDED IN THE ARMY. FINALLY, IVE SERVED IN THE ARMY G3 TWICE WHICH INCLUDED A YEAR IN G3 AVIATION AND ALSO SERVED AS A CONGRESSIONAL LIAISON.

WITH THAT BACKGROUND I WANT TO SAY THAT I FULLY SUPPORT THE ARMY'S PLAN TO MIGRATE THE APACHES FROM THE NATIONAL GUARD AND CONSOLIDATE THEM IN THE ACTIVE COMPONENT. BOTTOM LINE UP FRONT IS THE AIRCRAFT IS BECOMING MORE COMPLEX, THE MISSION IS BECOMING MORE COMPLEX AND I FEEL WE MUST PLACE THIS ASSET IN UNITS THAT CAN TRAIN ON THE SYSTEM AND MISSION FULL TIME. IN 2012 I WAS THE LEAD PLANNER FOR THE INITIAL EXORD THAT DIRECTED THE CONVERSION OF TWO RESERVE APACHE BATTALIONS FROM APACHES TO BLACKHAWKS AND FOR THE NATIONAL GUARD TO CONVERT TWO BATTALIONS AND DIVEST AN ADDITIONAL TWO BATTALIONS. IVE WATCHED THE PLAN CLOSELY AS ITS CHANGED OVER THE LAST 3 YEARS AND CONTINUE TO SUPPORT WHAT WE STARTED IN 2012

THE PLAN HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THE COURAGE OF THE NATIONAL GUARD APACHE AVIATORS OR THEIR WILLINGNESS TO SUPPORT THEIR NATION. IVE SERVED WITH THESE AVIATORS AND THEY ARE ALL PROFESSIONAL AND DEDICATED PILOTS SERVING IN TREMENDOUS UNITS. THEIR FLIGHT EXPERIENCE ON AVERAGE IS SLIGHTLY LESS THAT THEIR ACTIVE COUNTERPART WITH NATIONAL GUARD APACHE PILOTS HAVE ON AVERAGE 12% LESS NIGHT VISION FLYING HOURS. THE APACHE IS A COMPLEX AIRCRAFT AND WILL BECOME EVEN MORE COMPLEX WITH THE FIELDING OF THE AH-64E AND THE TREMENDOUS CAPABILITY THE AIRCRAFT HAS TO CONDUCT MANNED – UNMANNED TEAMING. THIS INCREASED COMPLEXITY

WILL PUT FURTHER PRESSURE ON THE NATIONAL GUARD APACHE PILOTS TO MAINTAIN NOT ONLY CURRENCY BUT PROFICIENCY IN ONLY 39 TRAINING DAYS A YEAR. OVER THE LAST 13 YEARS THE MISSION OF THE APACHE HAS BEEN RELATIVELY SIMPLE...CLOSE COMBAT ATTACKS OR CLOSE SUPPORT TO GROUND UNITS USING AN ATTACK WEAPONS TEAM. BASICALLY APACHE BATTALIONS OPERATING AT THE SMALLEST LEVEL POSSIBLE. THE ARMY IS NOW TRAINING FOR A MUCH MORE COMPLEX DECISIVE ACTION MISSION WITH WILL REQUIRE ADDITIONAL TRAINING TIME AND RESOURCES TO OPERATE IN A LARGER FORCE. WITH THE AIRCRAFT AND ITS MISSION BECOMING MORE COMPLEX I FEEL WE NEED TO PLACE THESE SYSTEMS WHERE THE SOLDIERS CAN TRAIN ON A FULL TIME BASIS.

THE 21ST CAVALRY BRIGADE WAS THE ARMY'S APACHE TRAINING BRIGADE. SINCE 1985 THE UNIT WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR FIELDING AND TRAINING ALL APACHE BATTALION FROM THE AH-64A DAYS TO THE AH-64D. AFTER 9/11 THIS INCLUDED A RESERVE COMPONENT TRAINING PLAN THAT CERTIFIED THE UNITS PRIOR TO DEPLOYMENT. DURING OUR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM WE SAW THE SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES THE NATIONAL GUARD UNITS HAD IN PLANNING AND EXECUTING AT THE COLLECTIVE LEVEL. WHILE THE INDIVIDUAL AVIATORS WERE PROFICIENT AND THE COMPANIES COULD LAUNCH ATTACK WEAPONS TEAMS THE STAFF AND COMMANDERS HAD A TREMENDOUS CHALLENGE IN PROVIDING COMMAND AND CONTROL AT THE COLLECTIVE LEVEL. WE HAD TO DEDICATE A TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF ENERGY TO GET THE COMMANDER AND HIS STAFF TO A LEVEL WHERE THEY COULD PROVIDE CRITICAL MISSION COMMAND TO THE TEAMS. IN THE FUTURE THE SYSTEMS WILL BE MORE COMPLEX, MANNED – UNMANNED TEAMING WILL BE AN ADDED TASK THE CREWS AND STAFF MUST EXECUTE, BATTALION LEVEL MISSIONS...NOT JUST LAUNCHING TEAMS BUT FOCUSING THE ENTIRE BATTALION ON THE TARGET, PLANNING FIRES, SUPPRESSION OF ENEMY AIR DEFENSE AND A MYRIAD OF OTHER TASKS THAT WERE NOT USED IN THE

OIF/OEF FIGHT. THE NATIONAL GUARD FEELS THEY CAN HAVE A BATTALION READY TO DEPLOY IN 196 DAYS OVER 4 YEARS. IN OIF/OEF WE SAW AN AVERAGE OF 409 DAYS. DUE TO THE INCREASE IN COMPLEXITY I FEEL WE WILL SEE AN INCREASE IN TRAINING TIME REQUIRED TO GET A BATTALION DEPLOYMENT READY AND NOT A DECREASE.

THE PANEL HEARD FROM THE ARMY STAFF SO I WONT ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF DEMAND AND THE STUDIES THAT WERE DONE THAT SUPPORT THE CONSOLIDATION SO THE ARMY CAN MEET COMMANDERS DEMANDS, I WONT ADDRESS THE COST AND DEPLOYABLE OUTPUT YOU GET FROM A NATIONAL GUARD BATTALION VERSUS AN ACTIVE DUTY BATTALION, I WONT ADDRESS HOW AN INCREASE IN BLACKHAWKS WILL INCREASE THE NATIONAL GUARDS CAPABILITY FOR ITS STATESIDE MISSION, I WONT ADDRESS THE CAPABILITY OF THE APACHE TEAMED WITH SHADOWS TO SERVE AS A RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT BUT HAVING FLOWN BOTH THE OH-58 AND AH-64 I BELIEVE IT CAN AND I DO NOT HAVE THE BUDGET NUMBERS TO SHOW YOU THE SAVINGS THAT OCCUR. HOWEVER, I DO KNOW THAT THE ARMY IS BEING FORCED TO MAKE TOUGH DECISIONS ON FORCE STRUCTURE AND FORCE MIX, WE ARE IN A TIME OF FISCAL UNCERTAINTY AND DECREASING BUDGETS AND THE TOTAL FORCE MUST ALL SHARE IN THE CUTS THAT MUST HAPPEN. THE ACTIVE COMPONENT WILL LOSE 25% OF ITS AVIATION FORCE, THE NATIONAL GUARD WILL LOSE 8%.

AS I STATED EARLIER I WAS INVOLVED IN THE INITIAL STEPS OF THIS PLAN AND HAVE WATCHED IT EVOLVE. I KNOW THE AVIATORS THAT HAVE DONE THE ANALYSIS AND I CAN ASSURE THE PANEL THAT THEY PROVIDED THE ARMY'S SENIOR LEADERS WITH THE BEST POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATIONS TO MAKE ARMY AVIATION THE BEST IT COULD BE, REGARDLESS OF THE COMPONENT, IN ORDER TO SUPPORT THE SOLDIERS ON THE GROUND. THANK

YOU FOR LISTENING TO MY VIEW AND I AM ALWAYS AVAILABLE FOR
QUESTIONS OR ADDITIONAL INPUT IF REQUIRED.